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Letter dated 25 January 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement issued by H.E. the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Glafcos Clerides, dated 21 January 1995 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the statement would be circulated as a document of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 51, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Alecos H. SHAMBOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Cyprus
to the United Nations

95-02191 (E) 260195 270195

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ANNEX

Statement issued by the President of the Republic of Cyprus on 21 January 1995

1. I have considered with great care the content of the statement issued by the Turkish Cypriot side (see S/1995/62, annex, appendix), which was made on the eve of the visit to Cyprus of Mr. Beattie, the envoy of President Clinton.

2. In order to approach the statement with an open mind, I admonished myself to concentrate on its content and to ignore recent statements made by Mr. Denktash to the effect that the military establishment in Turkey held the view that minimal concessions should be made in order to find a solution to the Cyprus problem, a view which he stated that he shared, and in order to avoid confrontation with the political establishment during the negotiations he was playing for time.

3. My observations on the content of the statement are the following:

(a) With regard to the introductory part of the Turkish Cypriot statement, which alleges that the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots are co-owners of the State of Cyprus and that Cyprus is their common home, my comment is that the Cyprus State is not a piece of real estate which is owned either by the Greek Cypriot or the Turkish Cypriot community, but is a State inhabited by 82 per cent Greek Cypriot citizens who belong to the Greek Cypriot community, 18 per cent Turkish Cypriot citizens who belong to the Turkish Cypriot community, by the Maronites, who have been living in Cyprus for centuries, the Latins, and the Armenians who took refuge in Cyprus after their persecution in Turkey. The State of Cyprus is, therefore, the common home of all its citizens;

(b) The Greek Cypriot side accepted and continues to accept that the solution to the Cyprus problem must be found by peaceful means and in order to demonstrate its belief in the peaceful negotiation process and remove suspicions, it proposed that the leaders of both communities should make a solemn declaration that neither community will attack the other and the Government of the Republic should abolish the National Guard, hand all its equipment and weapons to the United Nations, stop purchasing arms, accept United Nations inspection, deposit all money saved from the purchase of arms to a United Nations account to be used for infrastructure works beneficial to both communities and pay the total costs of a numerically increased peace-keeping force, on condition that Turkish Forces would be withdrawn from Cyprus and the Turkish Cypriot Forces would also hand their equipment to the United Nations. Unfortunately the proposal was rejected by the Turkish side;

(c) The Greek Cypriot side accepted since 1977 the agreement made by the late President of the Republic Archbishop Makarios and Mr. Denktash which was reconfirmed by President Kyprianou in 1979, i.e., that the solution to the Cyprus problem would be based on a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation. The Greek Cypriot side continues to accept both these agreements;

(d) The Turkish Cypriot statement attributes the failure to establish a bi-zonal federation, despite the fact that such negotiations started in 1977, to the absence of mutual trust and in support of this view it quotes the report of the Secretary-General of 19 November 1992 (S/24830), which stated that there was a deep crisis of confidence between the two sides, which made it difficult to envisage any successful outcome to the talks for as long as the situation prevailed. The Secretary-General also made other important diagnoses in his report to the Security Council of 30 May 1994 (S/1994/629), i.e., that the absence of progress was owing to the lack of political will by the Turkish Cypriot leadership, and the fact that the Turkish Cypriot side flouted international opinion as expressed in the Security Council.

4. The Turkish Cypriot statement that the Turkish Cypriot side accepts a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation does not amount to much. The stumbling block was never the title of the solution but its content.

5. The Greek Cypriot side accepted what was contained in numerous United Nations resolutions and was repeated on 29 July 1994 in paragraph 2 of resolution 939 (1994), in which the Security Council stated that the Federal Republic must have a single sovereignty. The Turkish Cypriot side insists that the "cantons" must have their own separate sovereignty.

6. The Greek Cypriot side accepted the definition which the Secretary-General gave in his report to the Security Council regarding the meaning of equal political status of both communities, i.e., that it does not mean numerically equal representations of two communities, one of which constitutes 82 per cent of the population and the other 18 per cent, but effective participation. The Turkish Cypriot side insists that equal political status means equal representation, consensus decisions and Presidency by rotation.

7. There are also substantial differences on all other major issues, such as the demilitarization, the treaties of guarantee, the settlers, the territorial and constitutional aspects, the accession of Cyprus to the European Union, etc.

8. The recent informal meeting between Mr. Denktash and myself in October 1994 demonstrated beyond any doubt that the Turkish side is not willing to be flexible on any of the main issues. A repetition, therefore, of talks will only mean a repetition of the same worn-out arguments which both sides know by heart. Furthermore, another failure to make progress on the substance will destroy the credibility of the negotiating process which after many years of repeated failures stands at the bottom level.

9. The Greek Cypriot side is willing to engage in a new negotiation process on the substance as soon as it is clear through shuttle diplomacy that sufficient common ground has been established on the main issues to make direct negotiations meaningful.

10. The Greek Cypriot side holds the view that implementation of the confidence-building measures without finding a common basis of the main issues will not contribute to the solution, but will perpetuate the status quo.

11. The Greek Cypriot side does not accept that the issue of joining the European Union is a matter to be discussed as soon as an agreement is reached on a bi-zonal, bi-communal federal solution. Acceptance by the Turkish Cypriot community to support the application of Cyprus to the already advanced road to become a member of the European Union will have a positive effect on finding a common ground for agreement.

12. The Greek Cypriot side believes that a joint declaration by the leaders of non-aggression will only create the much-desired climate of mutual trust if it is accompanied with a timetable for the withdrawal of the Turkish Forces and a timetable for abolishing the National Guard, the Turkish Cypriot Forces, the handing of their weapons to the United Nations, the stoppage of purchasing arms, United Nations inspection and a substantial increase of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus. Anything short of this will be unconvincing semantics.

13. With regard to the Turkish Cypriot proposal that in order to create trust and to contribute to the political process for a bi-communal and bi-zonal federal solution we should set up a transitional joint body to be chaired by the leaders of the two communities to look into daily matters and to develop and supervise the implementation of joint projects, this could only be done after agreement is reached on the main issues, otherwise it will be counter-productive. It will tend to perpetuate the status quo and to cultivate the mentality that the solution will be in many years to come and that in the meantime the status quo shall continue with the cooperation on some issues by both sides.

14. With regard to the unilateral declaration of the Turkish Cypriot side to improve the living conditions of the Greek Cypriots and the Maronites, we express our appreciation that the Turkish Cypriot side has realized that the living conditions of the Greek Cypriots in the north and the Maronites require betterment. I wish to point out that the third Vienna agreement which Mr. Denktash and I made many years ago provided for normal living conditions and the conditions of living of the enclaved persons were far from being normal. In this respect the confidential report to the United Nations Secretariat by the United Nations officer responsible for observing the situation throws ample light.

15. It is my earnest desire for an early solution to the Cyprus problem based on a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with one single sovereignty, one citizenship and one international personality and I am anxious that no further time shall be wasted through repetition of endless discussions and arguments, but strongly recommend that the main issues of the Cyprus problem be addressed in a comprehensive manner and in a way that will yield results.